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BERKSHIRE

THEATRE GROUP

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Following \$1.1 Million Restoration Berkshire Theatre Group Announces The Thaddeus Clapp House Opening Ceremony

Pittsfield, MA— Following a \$1.1 million restoration, Berkshire Theatre Group (BTG) is thrilled to celebrate the opening of The Thaddeus Clapp House (74 Wendell Ave, Pittsfield) on October 17th from 5pm–7pm. This celebration follows a record-breaking summer theatre season, with ticket sales up 25 percent and an additional 5,000 patrons recorded, over a very successful 2018 season.

In 2013, BTG bought The Thaddeus Clapp House to serve as actor housing, and now, BTG celebrates the realization of that goal and more. Major funding for the restoration of the Thaddeus Clapp House has been provided by the Massachusetts Cultural Facilities Fund, a program of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, administered through a collaborative arrangement between Mass Development and the Massachusetts Cultural Council. BTG acknowledges Allegrone Construction who served as general contractor for the restoration project, and the continued support of the City of Pittsfield. Additionally, special thanks are given to Wayfair and The Annie Selke Companies for their sponsorships of furniture and interior décor. Many other project partners who helped make the restoration possible will be acknowledged at the event.

Thanks to the support of those mentioned and many not mentioned, fundraising is almost complete. Opportunities to contribute are available, such as naming opportunities for one of Clapp House's nine suites.

Like The Colonial Theatre, which has become an important community resource for events of all kind, the Clapp House will also be available to rent. The Clapp House offers spaces for small to mid-sized events such as: business meetings, receptions, celebrations, conferences and special events. Rates for the events vary, as each event experience is customized and tailored to fit individual needs. Rooms will also be available to rent, and for those looking to fully experience everything the Clapp House has to offer, the entire house can be rented. Additionally, BTG will be offering a dinner/show package that features a buffet style menu at the Clapp House prior to select *A Christmas Carol* performances.

This space has allowed BTG to expand its Pittsfield Campus, and become stewards of this historic gem, just as they have been stewards of the Colonial, which is just a short walk away from the Clapp House. BTG's restoration of the Clapp House preserves the exterior Italianate style, as well as the interior Arts and Crafts style. As many original details as possible have been preserved in order to truly honor the history of the magnificent property. The beautiful front porch (funded in part by the City of Pittsfield's Community Preservation Act Program), has been exquisitely restored and once again adds to the aesthetic value of Wendell Ave.

The Colonial was built in 1903 and re-opened in 2006, following a \$21 million restoration. Boasting nearly 800 seats, pristine acoustics, classic gilded age architecture and state of the art technical systems, the Colonial hosts family entertainment, comedy, live music and more year-round.

Beyond the Pittsfield campus, BTG is also the steward of a historical Berkshire site in Stockbridge. The Stockbridge nine-acre campus is one of the longest running theatres in the country, marking 91 years of activity. This campus is home to the Playhouse, which houses The Fitzpatrick Main Stage, and the Mellon Barn, which houses not only BTG's scenic design shop, but the treasured Unicorn Theatre.

History of The Thaddeus Clapp House

Built in 1871, The Thaddeus Clapp House represents an important chapter in Pittsfield's history. From the home of a prominent local businessman to a boarding house and then a B&B, the Clapp House has a rich past.

Thaddeus Clapp was a descendant of Captain Roger Clapp, who sailed to Massachusetts from England in the mid-1600s. Captain Clapp was instrumental in the founding of Dorchester, and the Clapp family has been immortalized in Dorchester through the Dorchester Historical Society, whose headquarters is the historic William Clapp House (listed on the National Register of Historic Places).

In western Massachusetts, Thaddeus Clapp I served as treasurer and justice of the peace for his town, and went on to become a delegate to the Constitutional Convention for MA. One of his children, Thaddeus II, who would become Colonel Thaddeus Clapp, moved to Pittsfield in 1816. Shortly after Col. Clapp

retired as superintendent of the Pontoosuc Woolen Manufacturing Company, the Thaddeus Clapp House was built and purchased. His son, Thaddeus Clapp III, and other Clapp family members continued to be business leaders, and contributed to the booming economy of Pittsfield in the late 1800s and early 1900s.

The Thaddeus Clapp House passed out of the Clapp family in the early 1900s, and remained a private residence into the 1930s. Eventually, the home became a boarding house and apartment complex, though it continued to house prominent Pittsfield members, including members of the Francis and Briggs families. The Clapp House continued to pass through several hands, until BTG purchased it in 2013.

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About Berkshire Theatre Group

The Colonial Theatre, founded in 1903, and Berkshire Theatre Festival, founded in 1928, are two of the oldest cultural organizations in the Berkshires. In 2010, under the leadership of Artistic Director and CEO Kate Maguire, the two organizations merged to form Berkshire Theatre Group (BTG). Berkshire Theatre Group's mission is to support wide ranging artistic exploration and acclaimed performances in theatre, dance, music and entertainment. Every year, BTG produces and presents performances to over 68,000 attendees and, through our Educational Program, serves over 13,000 Berkshire County schoolchildren annually. BTG's celebrated stages reflect the history of the American theatre; they represent a priceless cultural resource for the community.